

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF MANSFIELD

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Housing Authority Office

July 21, 2016

9:30 a.m.

Attendance: Mr. Long, Chairman; Mr. Simonsen, Vice Chairman; Mr. Eddy, Secretary and Treasurer; Ms. Hall, Assistant Treasurer; Mr. Hundt, Commissioner; Ms. Fields, Executive Director; Hannah Rudd, Development Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 9:55 a.m. by the Chairman.

MINUTES

The Chairman declared, without objection, the acceptance of the minutes of the June 23, 2016 Regular Meeting.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

COMMUNICATIONS

None

REPORTS OF THE DIRECTOR

Bills

The Chairman declared, without objection, the acceptance of the June bills.

Financial Reports –A (General)

The Chairman declared, without objection, the acceptance of the May Financial Reports.

Financial Report-B (Section 8 Statistical Report)

The Chairman declared, without objection, the acceptance of the June Section 8 Statistical Report.

REPORT FROM TENANT REPRESENTATIVE

General Reports

Mr. Hundt reported that everything was fine.

Mr. Eddy asked the Board to start looking for a replacement for him as his term expires on October 31, 2016 and he is not interested in renewing his term.

Mr. Eddy also ask that consideration be given to moving this meeting to the Knop Shop rather than the office conference room as there would be more room and with guests, the size of the current conference room is too small. The Knop Shop would require some modification to provide heating/cooling.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Affordable Housing/Housing Trust

The group met again on June 30th and it was agreed that Ms. Rudd and Ms. Mullen will gather more information on setting up a trust. They met again on July 20 and made plans to visit with folks at the Champlain Housing Trust and the Burlington Housing Authority in Vermont. That Trust has been in existence since 1984. That trip is planned for July 27th and 28th.

NEW BUSINESS

Mansfield Single Family Home Renters

Ms. Fields expressed concern about a recent article in the *Willimantic Chronicle* regarding a possible freeze on allowing single family homes to be used as rentals and statements that rental properties “lead to neighborhood destabilization.” Ms. Fields stated that when students are the single focus which drives policy it risks creating unintended consequences. In this case freezing new single family homes would eventually lessen the supply of such homes for rent generally. This would have two main consequences of concern to the Housing Authority. First, it would make it harder for people with our Section 8 vouchers to find housing in Mansfield simply because the amount of rental housing would be less than it otherwise would have been. Second, such a freeze would lead, all else equal, to higher rents for those homes that are available for rent as demand outstrips supply. It is the mission of the Housing Authority to create and encourage affordable housing in the Town of Mansfield and a freeze on single family rentals would have a detrimental effect by decreasing the opportunities of moderate and lower income families to live in our community.

Ms. Fields stressed that it is a broad overgeneralization that single family rental homes leads to neighborhood destabilization. Both families and students can be stable, good renters, and good neighbors. Conversely, owner occupied homeowners can be bad neighbors and destabilize a neighborhood for the same reasons that are levelled against renters. The real issue for which policy should be considered is to discourage specific bad behavior, not controlling the owner or renter status of the home occupants.

There are many rental homes, housing families and students, scattered throughout this Town where there are no issues. Ms. Fields suggested that the Board consider weighing in on this proposal and provide some balance to the conversation on rental housing and the impact that a freeze would have on creating affordable housing opportunities.

Holinko Estates – PILOT

The State will not be paying the PILOT for 2015-2016, due in July, or 2016-2017 and it appears it may be put back in the State budget for 2018. The Mansfield Nonprofit Housing Development Corporation (MNHDC) entered into an agreement with the Town to pay amount “not to exceed 12% of the net shelter rent per annum” for Holinko Estates. While the MNHDC did not end up owning the Holinko property, the intent is clear. Ms. Fields stated that there is no agreement between the Town and the Housing Authority of which she is aware. Currently, the Wrights Village property pays 10% of the

net shelter rent per annum. CHFA thought that the understanding was that the State legislature was asking the towns not to ask for a PILOT from the for the Moderate Income properties. Ms. Fields thinks that some payment should be made as the families living in those units are provided multiply benefits from the town. Ms. Fields stated that for the last couple years the State has paid just over \$10,000.

Mr. Simonsen suggested the Housing Authority split the difference with the Town as this is an unbudgeted item and to for the Board to consider what is possible in the next budget in 2017.

A motion was made by Mr. Simonsen and seconded by Mr. Eddy to pay the Town \$5,000 in PILOT this year. Motion approved unanimously.

Section 8 Administrative Plan Changes

Nan McKay and Associates sent the most current changes to update the Section 8 Administrative Plan to comply with the most current changes to the regulations. All changes were incorporated into the plan without modification with the following exception in Chapter 6 and Chapter 8. Ms. Fields provided the two modifications to the Board for review.

Chapter 6 - Earned Income Disregard allows the PHA to choose to disregard "annual income of the family at least 50 percent of any increase in income." The Mansfield Housing Authority chose 50 percent.

Chapter 8 – Inspection Fee allow the PHA to choose to charge a reasonable amount for re-inspection to an owner in certain situations. The Mansfield Housing Authority chose to allow a re-inspection fee of \$50.00 at the discretion of the Authority.

A motion was made by Mr. Simonsen and seconded by Ms. Hall to accept the changes as presented. Motion approved unanimously.

Section 8 Administrative Fee

The administrative fee is going to use a new formula for the future. It is expected to increase our fees as much as 37%. Those too may be pro-rated. HUD is adjusting the fees based on the results of the Administrative Fee Study to more accurately pay housing authorities for actual costs of administering the program.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Litigation

Ms. Fields asked the Chairman to request a vote to go into Executive Session in order to discuss a litigation matter which contains privileged information. The Chairman requested a motion be made.

A motion was made by Mr. Simonsen and seconded by Mr. Eddy to go into Executive Session at 11:20 a.m. and to invite Ms. Fields and Ms. Rudd.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 11:55 a.m.

MEETING DATE REVIEW

The next meeting has been changed from August 18, 2016 to August 25, 2016 at 9:30 a.m.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m. without objection.

Dexter Eddy, Secretary

Approved:

Richard Long, Chairman